

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 500

September 10, 2004

Members Present

Debby Parsons for Melodie Friedebach
Kathy Fuger
Linda Bowers for Anne Deaton
Lisa Robbins
Valeri Lane
Joan Harter
Darin Preis for Tracey King
Stacey Ismail for Paula Nickelson

Leslie Elpers
Ronald Roberts
Susan Allen
Gretchen Schmitz for Marsha Mills
Sharon Hailey
Margaret Franklin
Sherl Taylor for Christine Rackers

Members Not Present

Vicki Walker
Elizabeth Spaug

Pamela Byars

DESE Staff Present

Alycia Haug
Bill Connelly
Joyce Jackman

Amanda Wogan
Dale Carlson
Kate Numerick

To review copies of handouts mentioned in the minutes below, go to the following website:
<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCmtgdates.htm> and click on "Handouts" for the meeting you are interested in.

Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions – Valeri Lane called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made.

Approval of SICC Minutes – Sharon Hailey made a motion to approve the minutes. Lisa Robins seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Update on National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) Committees (Continuous Improvement and IFSP Quality Rating Scale Indicators) – Both committees indicated that the literature review was critical for all First Steps providers to be able to access. The items included in the literature review are listed under "other resources" on the First Steps web page. NECTAC will be in St. Louis, on September 22nd and 23rd, to conduct three sessions (space for 300 attendees at each session) to go over the literature review material and the IFSP Quality Rating Scale Indicators. The training will be video taped and the questions and answers will be collected to go out via polycom (video conferencing) so the rest of the state can view these trainings.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Committee Meeting Recap – Kate Numerick indicated that the committee recommended retaining the recredentailling process. Registration will be taken at the September NECTAC meeting and the polycom conference so that

attendance can be counted towards recredentialing. There are 2,000 providers, most of whom do not have their credential. Once the current providers are credentialed, it is estimated that 12-15 new providers may enroll each month. Due to the small numbers of providers that may be located throughout the state, it may not be cost effective to offer face to face training. Providers have their professional education requirements, on-going training requirements, and belong to organizations to further their professional development. However, these providers still need training to provide quality services in the early intervention system. Trainings that are on-line can be available at any time. Presentations can be archived for review. There will also be video conferences (Moodle, instant messages, chat rooms). DESE will review what has been posted on-line and send out any necessary messages based on that posted conversation. First Steps consultants will be able to help monitor the chat room messages and possibly be mentors. DESE will ask twenty registrants to assist with piloting the orientation training using Moodle in October. Currently it can take six-nine months to revise a module, but with the use of content management software mass changes can be made quickly. The committee will meet again in the spring to look at the recredentialing details. It will be convenient for people to retake modules when they are updated when they are online (no travel or certain times to take it). At some point, provider contracts will need to be redone. Currently, contracts are active until the person withdraws or DESE revises the contract. If DESE chooses to revise the contracts, then the new contracts can reflect that the providers must retake the modules as they are updated. Valeri indicated that she would like to see information on the steps of the provider oversight at the next meeting. Online modules allow consistency and give parents access to view the information. Concerns were raised about those who will be using Moodle and the online training and if they would have the technology needed to operate the systems. The new software that DESE will be using will require the formats for the modules to be revised to include more text with video anecdotes. Both Kathy Fuger and Lisa Robbins asked to be put on the list for the CSPD committee.

IFSP Quality Indicator Rating Scale – This document will be posted on the web. The scale will allow SPOEs to rate an IFSP. Three categories have been identified: acceptable (1), unacceptable (3), and best practices (5). In October, a committee will meet to create the exemplars. The information will be put together in a guidance document. Kate Numerick asked anyone who works with IFSPs and would be interested in working with the exemplars to let her know by next Friday. This document was created in response to the performance standard outlined in the new SPOE contract. A suggestion was made to add a footnote indicating the document was reviewed and approved by the SICC. It was suggested that the SICC could adopt this at the November meeting. Since this is a contractual obligation for the new SPOEs, DESE will need to distribute the document to the SPOEs prior to the November meeting. The SICC can put a statement on it now that they support the document even if there are changes made. Sue Allen motioned that at footer be added to the document stating that the SICC reviewed and supports this document. Stacey Ismail and Lisa Robbins seconded the motion. Motion passed. Exemplars will be an attachment, not embedded into this document. The document includes areas where there is not a separate best practice ranking. These areas were discussed originally, but for some areas the acceptable standard is the same as the best practice. Comments were made that the document does not look complete with blank spaces. A note needs to be added to indicate that acceptable is best practice. The new SPOEs were asked to update the SICC on the IFSP Quality Indicator Rating Scale at the November meeting, but this will be brief because they will receive the exemplars in November.

Update on Evaluation Instruments – DESE was presented the question, if the Vineland cannot be used, then what can be used? On the First Steps web page under other resources, there is an eleven page list (from NECTAC) of possible screening and diagnostic instruments. This page lists the instrument, who can administer it, age range, description, and uses. DESE's position is that

any assessment may be used as long as there is a qualified person to administer and score it. Test instrument manuals indicate the qualification for persons administering the test. The list contains both screening and assessment instruments. The issue came about because the new Vineland has to have a psychologist both purchase and administer it. Sharon Hailey indicated she was looking for something in the area of adaptive behavior. In the assessment module, only the Vineland is listed. Kate Numerick will review the list to see if other adaptive behavior measures are included.

SPOE Software Demonstration – Vince Forcier gave a demonstration of the new web-based system. The new system will have significant changes and the demonstration provided today is just an overview.

- **Provider Module**–This module is available now, but currently only about 20% of claims are being entered online. Access varies depending on provider/position. There is a bulletin board to post messages. Providers can select to have e-mail notification of information. Providers can submit paper claims, but view the status online.
- **Family Module**–Referrals will be entered here. If a family reports an issue regarding services, the IFSP team will be able to view the delivered services (intensity, frequency, duration, but not the amount of money) to make sure the services are happening as entered on the IFSP. County of residence and zip code will be used for tracking. Referrals from Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) can be entered here as well as referrals from other primary referral sources.
- **Case Management System**–The system is a living document. The IFSP runs the timeline, but is driven by the meeting dates. There are different sections in this part of the system:
 - Child – all of the child and family’s demographic information.
 - Health - health information (immunization, physicians, neonatal, diagnosis).
 - Domains – assessment and summaries of developmental areas.
 - Eligibility – eligibility determination, team, authorizations and notes.
 - Case history – includes team meeting history, meeting planner, meeting activities, and team members as well as history and development of IFSPs.
 - Notes – child progress, case notes, and compliance notes.
- When a child exits, then re-enters the system, it will indicate a file already exists and ask if the new SPOE wants the file. The previous SPOE will have to authorize the file transfer.
- Currently 50 different tables are set up for access purposes.
- The IFSP and social history will be on-line. Signed consent documents will not be available on-line, but the information listed on the consent will be on-line.
- The system will be the official record.

Question

- **Will providers be able to access health information?** Providers will not be able to see insurance or salary. Access to other health information will depend on HIPAA regulations.
- **Can families access the system?** Families cannot access the file from home, but the service coordinator can review the child’s electronic file with the family at the SPOE and/or print the document if requested. IFSP teams, case manager, and service coordinators have access.
- **Will other agencies (DMH, DOH, Medicaid, school districts) have access to the system?** Agencies will not, but service coordinators will have access. Reports can be created to provide any needed information. DESE cannot give general access to children’s files due to FERPA requirements for family notification.
- **Are there any guidelines for the distribution of information?** Guidelines have not changed. Those who have access to the system will distribute information the same way they do now. The system will record everyone who accesses the file.
- **Can the term “Case Management” be changed?** The name was given by the CFO to separate the scope of work, so the name could be change.

- **How will the information be entered from the families' home?** There will be an issue in homes without a dial up connection because the system is browser based. A word type document will be available later to take where the internet is unavailable, but this is not in the current scope of work. The data can be copied and pasted from the document into the web-based system, except the dates and check boxes.
- **How will the transition work from the current system to the new system?** Both systems will run simultaneously for awhile. The systems won't allow the same record in both systems. The implementation will start in the Northwest SPOE, then the two St. Louis area SPOEs, then the rest of the state.

Focused Monitoring Update – DESE has had two meetings with Alan Coulter and his staff. The self assessment check list was completed. Broad based monitoring was discussed. It was the recommendation of the consultants to develop a general supervision framework prior to developing focused monitoring procedures. This framework will be discussed with stakeholders. All general supervision requirements including finance and data need to be outlined prior to discussing. This group will meet prior to the SICC meeting. This was the reason for changing the November SICC meeting date. Stakeholder group will consist of: higher education representatives, school district staff, SICC, parents, SPOEs, First Steps Consultants, providers, service coordinators, and other state agency staff. This group will review the framework DESE drafted and make sure it is complete. The stakeholder group would meet one to two times per year. Some of the information and PowerPoint presentations are on the First Steps website. The National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring's website is <http://www.monitoringcenter.lsuhs.edu/>. Debby asked that anyone having trouble with the new First Steps website to e-mail Bill Connelly and let him know. Those indicating interest in participating were Lisa, Sherry, Richard (Linda), Margie (maybe), Leslie, Valeri, Kathy, Darin. Sherl will get someone from Medicaid. Ronald Roberts will check his work schedule and see if can participate as a parent representative. Debby will send out e-mail if there are people missing from certain groups. A sign up sheet will be available for those in the audience who wish to be considered.

Update on DESE's "Priority Task List" – Debby Parsons provided a handout giving an update of the fourteen items. Many of the items are listed separately on the agenda. Valeri Lane asked that DESE update this list at each meeting and show closed items and new priority items.

1. Interagency Agreement – This is a separate agenda item.
2. Legislation for family cost participation – There has been no further progress on this issue. DESE will wait till after elections to pursue further.
3. Standards of Practice, now referred to as IFSP Quality Indicator Rating Scale – This is on the agenda as a separate item to be discussed by Kate Numerick.
4. Parent Survey – The survey has been posted on the web with the service coordinator and provider names redacted.
5. Appropriate Referrals – DESE is working with Parents as Teachers to provide information to parent educators on making appropriate referrals to First Steps.
6. Monitoring System – Already discussed by Debby Parsons.
7. New RFP Outcome Measures – This is a separate agenda item.
8. Training for New SPOEs – DESE met with the new SPOEs on Wednesday. Yesterday all SPOE directors met.
9. Data System – Vince will be here to demonstrate the new system.
10. Training Committee – This will be discussed with the CSPD Committee meeting update.
11. Developing SPOE Directors as Leaders – Literature review has been shared.
12. Provider System – This is a separate agenda item.
13. Cost Containment – This is a separate agenda item.
14. Belief and Philosophy Document - This is a separate agenda item.

OSEP's Response to APR – Debby Parsons asked if there were any questions or comments from last meeting. The initial requirement was to give OSEP an update on the monitoring system by the end of October. DESE will share the interim progress report, OSEP's response, with the SICC in November. Any other items OSEP is asking for will be part of the next APR which is due to OSEP in the spring of 2005. Valeri Lane asked for people to review the document and let Valeri or Stacy know if they would like further discussion at a future meeting.

Evaluation Assessment Cost Information – As requested by the SICC, Dale Carlson's budget update handout, "SICC First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Report", further breaks out total direct service expenditure data by EI services, evaluation/assessment, and team meetings. More information is available in the Budget/Finance/Data report below.

"No Provider Available" Update – No Provider Available (NPA) option/reporting should be used for evaluation, assessment, and direct services. Bill Connelly passed around a map that shows which areas are using this option. Accurate reporting of NPA will provide information for provider recruitment. The option was made available to the SPOEs in April. If any SPOEs have questions regarding this option, then they need to contact DESE. The current choices for NPA are: no provider available; provider available, but neither the parent nor the provider will travel; and provider not taking new clients. Two suggestions were made to add: provider available, but will not work for First Steps; parents left First Steps due to NPA. DESE will continue to monitor this on a statewide basis.

Budget/Finance/Data Reports for SPOEs Update – Dale Carlson began the budget update with the following observations based on the SICC discussion to this point. Stakeholders should be aware that the Missouri First Steps system is producing some "cutting edge" structural outcomes. Five of these are: the standards of practice (possible national recognition); the web application screen currently being built by Covansys (possible national recognition); CSPD; state level funding (while it is difficult to directly compare state early intervention (Part C) systems due to the variance in state laws, population demographics, program goals and structure, stakeholders should realize that the Missouri legislature supports the First Steps system very well in terms of appropriations of state funds when compared to other states); and new SPOE structure/oversight model. These are areas that point to some very good things happening in the Missouri First Steps system.

The first update document "SICC First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Report" indicates revenues and expenditures by month. It provides the committee with requested breakouts (detail expenditure information) on direct services, detailing expenditures amounts for the month for EI services, evaluation/assessment, and team meetings. This report provides an estimated point in the fiscal year (March) in which the First Steps system may expend all available direct service funds (based on the July [\$2.1 million] and August [\$1.77 million] expenditure rate for direct services). This is indicated by shading the March 2005 column. The actual date is dependent upon the actual expenditure rate by month. As that rate drops, funds for direct services will be available for a longer period of time in the fiscal year. Leslie Elpers asked, if we run out of money in March, how will the rest of the items under expenditures be affected? Dale indicated that funds for administration and operations which include the SPOE/CFO functions are encumbered to insure those functions (find, assess and evaluate children, pay service providers, collect data, etc.) continue to operate.

The second budget update document, "First Steps Expenditures by Month (FY05)", available on the First Steps web site, reflects total revenues available for the First Steps system and breaks out direct services expenditures by SPOE by month as well as SPOE child count by month. The

“balance remaining” field reflects the remaining funds available for direct services in the fiscal year. The purpose of this field is to give the reader a projected time frame in which direct service funds may be fully expended by comparing the direct service “balance remaining” with the average monthly expenditure rate for direct services. Expenditures reflect direct service funds as sent to providers during the month (payments to provider are made 30-45 days in arrears) and may not reflect the actual provision of services in that month. The significant increase in direct service expenditures for July (\$2.1 million) likely reflects late direct services billings for May (\$1.6 million) and June (\$1.1 million), which were lower than the typical monthly average expenditure (\$1.8 million) throughout FY04.

System cost containment must remain a priority discussion item. The use of a direct services budget by SPOE area was briefly discussed, but implementing such a budget proves to be difficult in the current Phase I/Phase II mix of SPOE operations. While the Phase I SPOEs have more control over operational costs, the Phase II SPOEs do not currently have that level of control. Implementation and acceptance of the Federal Part C/Early Intervention/First Steps philosophy by parents, SPOEs, and provider network, as well as bringing service coordination under the direct supervision of the SPOEs (as in the Phase I rebid) should begin to impact direct service costs. Changes (costs/child related data) relating to the new Phase I SPOE operations should start to become evident by November/December. Preliminary data seems to indicate a significant reduction in children exceeding the 45-day timeline in the Phase I SPOE areas. While the 45 day backlog in each of the new SPOEs still exists, the number of new children entering the First Steps system through the new SPOEs exceeding 45 days shows a dramatic drop.

Dale discussed the budget process: Division budget submitted to DESE Budget Section in August; the Department Budget Section submitted to Office of Administration (OA) October 1 (for OA analysis and Governor review) prior to the legislative session which begins in January. Legislative review (Department budget hearings) continues throughout late January through May with approval of the final state budget prior to session adjournment in mid-May. The SICC members generally understand the appropriations process and realize that appropriations for First Steps are finite (appropriated) amount of revenue. This level of understanding may not be found outside of the SICC which tends to generate misunderstandings concerning the availability of funding for First Steps. The Division has requested \$6 million increase to the FY06 core appropriation. The supplemental, if approved, is typically available in early April.

Joyce Jackman provided a budget related handout, “Payments by Authorization and Service Coordinators July 2004” for region 17 as an example of the type of data becoming available for analysis. This report indicates services authorized by independent and DMH service coordinators and provides another way of looking at the monthly expenditures for the direct services by child. DESE continues to work with the CFO to better define the data reporting requirements necessary to better analyze budget/funding issues in the First Steps system.

DMH Interagency Agreements – Debby Parsons indicated that there is not a draft agreement to review at this time.

ICC Nominations—Ronald Roberts was recently appointed to the council as a parent representative and this is his first meeting. A member of the council asked if DESE could start sending out a letter, acknowledging receipt of the nomination, whether or not it were sent over to the Governor’s office for appointment or that their information will be kept on file. Leslie Elpers also asked about the council having a nomination committee. This has been added to the list of questions for the bylaw changes.

Bylaws to Review as First Read – Significant discussion took place regarding the questions and changes. It was decided to add the new questions to the current list and e-mail them out to the council for comment. All SICC members are to e-mail any responses to these questions back to DESE prior to the next meeting. Leslie Elpers and Melodie Friedebach will go through the comments and create a draft to present at the November SICC meeting. This way there can be a first read at the November meeting.

Belief Statements and Philosophy Document – Valeri Lane indicated that the SICC should review and approve this document. The document was also discussed at the SPOE meeting yesterday. The SPOEs want to have this available to start using. After a discussion time with various suggestions it was decided that the SICC was not ready to approve the document in its current form. The council was asked to e-mail all general comments and/or content issues to Valeri Lane by October 15th.

Future SICC Meeting Dates – At the end of the meeting, a handout was passed around containing the future meeting dates and locations as follows:

- January 21, 2005, Truman Building, Room 400
- March 11, 2005, Truman Building, Room 400
- May 13, 2005, Truman Building, Room 400
- July 8, 2005, Truman Building, Room 400

Lack of Providers in Rural Areas –Leslie Elpers' handout was distributed at the May meeting. Debby got feedback from Compliance and other DESE staff. Below are the questions and answers:

- **Expand use of consultative model, job sharing, and reimbursement for families** - All can be implemented based on the IFSP and child's needs. Currently, a family can get reimbursed for mileage by enrolling in the system. All payments in the system are on a reimbursement basis.
- **Increase reimbursement, including travel.** – Debby Parsons stated this was discussed with Medicaid. Sherl stated that Medicaid is not allowed to reimburse a provider for transportation. Someone asked if Part C funds be used? No, Medicaid won't permit a two tier payment for services. Transportation is not a service and is not covered by Medicaid. Sharon asked about not doing mileage reimbursement, but having a rural incentive. Debby will follow-up with NECTAC on materials from other states.
- **Pay developmental therapist mileage.** –Special instruction/developmental therapy are not Medicaid service. A subcommittee of this council may want to keep looking at this area and work with Dale and Joyce on rates. A provider availability subcommittee could address this area. Leslie gave out her e-mail address and directions on the web for those interested in contacting her.
- **More up to date and to the point information available via e-mail.** – The CSPD committee is addressing issue of training. Communication has gotten better (e-mail) and clearer.
- **Providers need to be paid on time.** – The online process (provider billing) was implemented.
- **Procedural safeguard reviewed and make sure parents understand their rights. Simplify child complaint procedures.** - There is information on the web. DESE is working to get more information on the parent's page on the web.
- **Where do compensatory services come from if they aren't available to begin with?** – The web based system will provide data on compensatory services. When a provider becomes available, then the IFSP team needs to convene to decide how much compensatory services the child should get.

There are parts that can be implemented, like job sharing, that people are not aware are available. Leslie's workgroup will develop a written response. Valerie Lane, Kathy Daulton, Jennifer Yerington, and Heather Weddle agreed to assist. This item will be put on the agenda for the next meeting and Leslie was asked to provide a written update.

Due to lengthy discussion on some topics, the following agenda items that were not discussed:

- Contract update on the First Steps Consultants
- Date of First Steps Day
- LICC reports
- LICC/RICC update from the St. Louis area
- Summary of SPOE Directors meeting from the previous day
- Legislative advocacy.

These items will be carried over to the agenda for the November 19th meeting.

Kathy Fuger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Robins seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:00.